

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SPC-03 SAM-01 AID-20 EB-11 NSC-10

RSC-01 CIEP-02 TRSE-00 SS-20 STR-08 OMB-01 CEA-02

FEA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 FRB-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 XMB-07

OPIC-12 LAB-06 SIL-01 INT-08 L-03 DODE-00 PA-04

USIA-15 PRS-01 DRC-01 /170 W
----- 001808

R 300805Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5851

C O N F I D E N T I A L COTONOU 0161

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, DM, US

SUBJECT: DAHOMEANS AGREE TO MEETING WITH UNION OIL

1. UNION OIL REP GREENWALD RECEIVED COPY OF REPLY DATED JANUARY 28 TO UNION'S LETTER OF JANUARY 24 REQUESTING MEETING WITH MRGD AUTHORITIES (COTONOU 0140). REPLY, SIGNED BY MINISTER ATCHADE, AGREED TO MEETING ON FEBRUARY 15. HOWEVER, ATCHADE ADDED THAT "IT WOULD BE UNDERSTOOD THAT YOUR REPRESENTATIVES WILL BRING CONCRETE PROPOSALS BASED ON THE DOCUMENTS WHICH HAVE BEEN TRANSMITTED TO YOU."

2. BELIEVE THIS WILLINGNESS TO MEET AGAIN WITH UNION IS ATTEMPT ON PART OF DAHOMEANS TO DEMONSTRATE GOOD FAITH WITH COMPANY WHICH HAS MADE SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENT IN OIL EXPLORATION. BUT, IT SHOULD NOT BE INTERPRETED AS INDICATION MRGD NOW WILLING NEGOTIATE ON BASIS 1964 CONVENTION. ON CONTRARY, "DOCUMENTS" REFERRED TO IN LETTER ARE NEW PETROLEUM CODE (COTONOU A-80) AND MRGD RESPONSE TO UNION'S PROPOSAL PRESENTED DURING LAST DECEMBER'S NEGOTIATING SESSIONS. (COTONOU 1773 AND SPE.) UNION NOW MUST COME UP WITH NEW PROPOSAL BASED ON THESE "DOCUMENTS" IF THERE IS TO BE ANY
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HOPE OF FRUITFUL NEGOTIATIONS. AS WE REPORTED IN COTONOU 0140,

1964 CONVENTION IS DEAD ISSUE AS FAR AS DAHOMEANS CONCERNED. CONTINUED REFERENCE BY UNION TO ITS INVIOABILITY CAN ONLY LEAD TO FINAL RUPTURE. MRGD IS UNDER GREAT ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PRESSURE TO PRODUCE EVIDENCE OF FORWARD MOVEMENT TOWARDS EXPLOITATION OF OIL. THEREFORE, UNION'S ONLY CHANCE TO ACHIEVE ELEVENTH-HOUR AGREEMENT IS TO PRESENT POSITIVE PROPOSAL WHICH APPROACHES CONDITIONS POSED IN NEW PETROLEUM CODE AND MRGD COUNTERPROPOSAL GIVEN UNION NEGOTIATORS IN DECEMBER.

3. BELIEVE MY TALKS WITH PRESIDENT, MINFORAFFS ALLADAYE AND BABA MOUSSA MAY HAVE HELPED IN REOPENING DOOR TO UNION. ON EVE OF VISIT BY EXIM BANK OFFICIALS, MRGD NO DOUBT DOES NOT WISH APPEAR TO BE HIGH HANDED IN ITS TREATMENT OF AMERICAN PRIVATE FIRM. ANOTHER FACTOR IS GROWING REALIZATION OF DIFFICULTIES WHICH UNION COULD CAUSE MRGD IN FINDING ANOTHER COMPANY TO EXPLOIT ITS OIL. THUS, CONDITIONS FOR NEGOTIATION MAY BE SLIGHTLY MORE PROPITIOUS THAN IN DECEMBER. BUT, THIS NEGOTIATION MUST NOT AGAIN BE APPROACHED ON BASIS 1964 CONVENTION IF IT IS TO HAVE ANY CHANCE OF SUCCESS. ANDERSON

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Message Attributes

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